

THE SACRED RAWDHAH

**It's Boundary, Virtues, Monuments
and most Prominent Developments**



Prepared by
Dr.Ahmad Muhammad Sha'ban
Teaching staff member at Tibah University





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Ahmad Muhammad Shabaan
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جميع الحقوق محفوظة

الطبعة الأولى

١٤٣٣هـ





بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ
مِمَّا تَرْجُو

وَمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ
مِمَّا تَرْجُو

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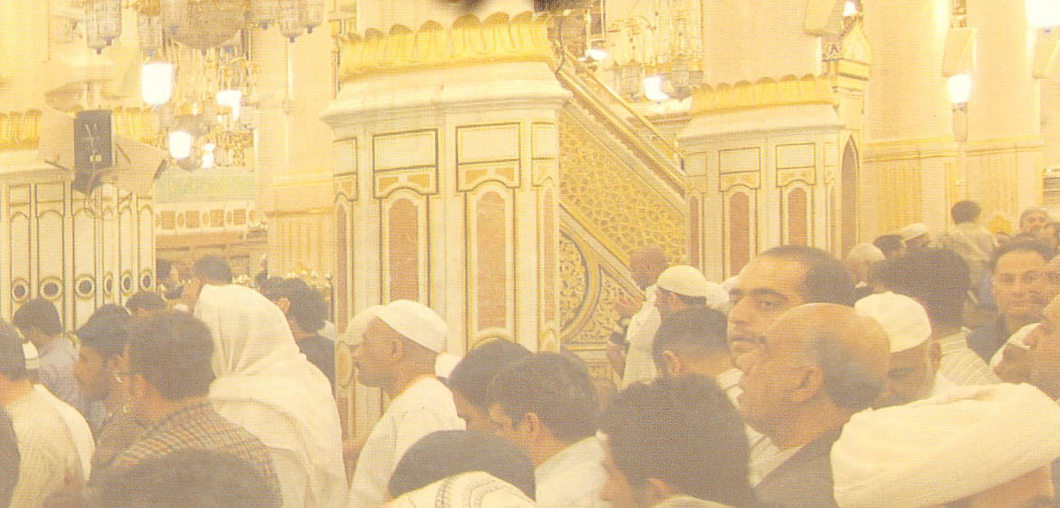
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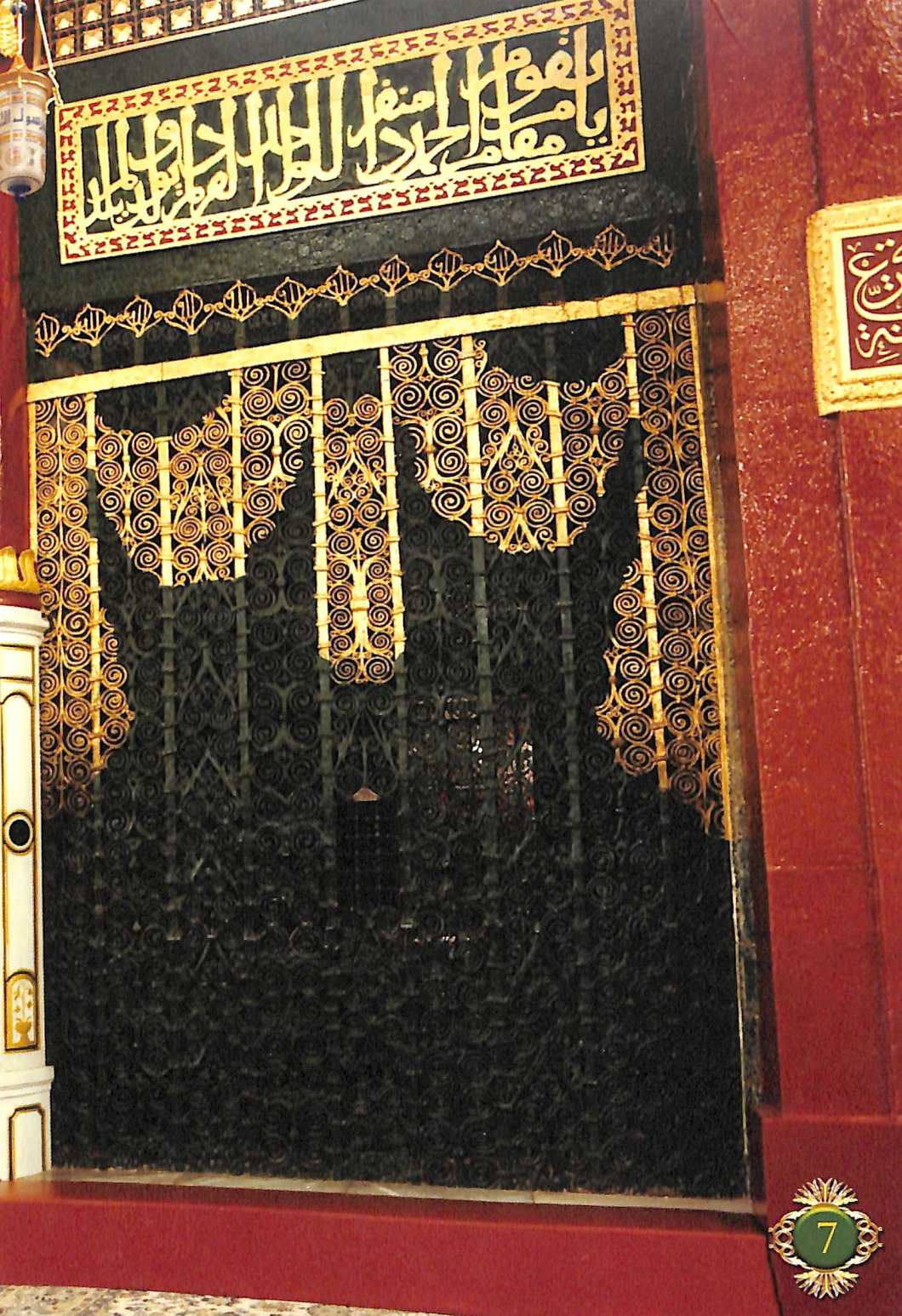
Preamble

الحمد لله والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله وعلى آله وصحبه ومن والاه وبعد :

As part of the rights of the Muslim Nation it ought to cherish its history and engulf all its relevant monuments with fortresses of dignity and dedication particularly those that appertain to its faith and values.

The Sacred Rawdhah is not only considered one of the most prominent monuments but a portion of the Paradise. It constitutes part and parcel of a magnificent age as well as the key to the treasures of incessant spirituality and ebullient emotion.

Notwithstanding the level of eloquence one may attain he can never embrace but an incredibly minute aspect of its history just like the sip of water assimilated by one that is exceptionally thirsty on reaching to an unfathomably plangent sea. Though its depth remains overflowing with all the secrets and replete with all principles and values.



The Boundary of Ar-Rawdhah

Ar-Rawdhah is the place situated between the chamber of As-Sayyidah Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) and the sacred Pulpit of prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be on him). Demarcation of its boundary is based on what Al-Bukhary and Muslim transmitted on the authority of Abdullah Bin Zaid Al-Maziny (may Allah be pleased with him) that Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) said: "The position between my residence and my pulpit is a garden among the gardens of the Paradise"⁽¹⁾.

Being rectangular in shape, Ar-Rawdhah extends eastwards from the beginning of the Sacred Chamber to Al-Wufud Column. Westwards, it rests between the Sacred Pulpit to half way the (Mukabbariyyah) elevated chamber where the Muaddhin amplifies and

⁽¹⁾ Al-Bukhary vol.1, pp. 399 Hadith no. 1137 and Muslim vol.2, pp. 1010, Hadith no. 1390.



Depicting an approximation of the Prophet's Mosque at Launch

diffuses the voice of the Imam to the worshippers all over the mosque. From the north, it begins by Al-Wufud Column and extends half way the said chamber. Moreover, it is 26.5m long from the east to the west, though the surrounding windows of the Sacred Chamber cover part of it leaving out an area of about 22m long.

South - North it is 15m wide and it covers an entire area of about 397.5 meters square.

However, some learned scholars said that Ar-Rawdhah extends from As-Sayyidah Aishah's chamber to the famous Eid prayer ground by Masjid Al-Ghamamah, while some others argue that it extends over the whole area covered by the holy Mosque of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) in his time basing their argument on certain weak traditions narrated to this effect which cannot withstand the authentic tradition earlier cited. Allah knows best.



What is meant by the prophet's words

"A garden among the gardens of the Paradise"

Linguistically, the word "Ar-Rawdhah" is used to signify a green piece of land or a beautiful ranch.

Yet, learned scholars differ regarding the meaning of this tradition. Some said that it is a kind of simile in which the article of comparison is not stated, indicating that this piece of land is, in point of fact, a garden among the gardens of the Paradise with regard to the descent of mercy and attainment of bliss through the inherence of those circles of glorifying Allah⁽¹⁾ especially during the prophetic era (blessings and peace of Allah be on him).

Some others hold the opinion that this statement is metaphorical and its actual meaning will only materialize in the hereafter. This implies that whoever maintains his obedience to Allah the most High at this spot will end up in a garden among the gardens of the Paradise on the Day of Reckoning.

(1) Here, there is reference to the tradition that says: "When you pass by the gardens of the Paradise you should graze. They asked: what are the gardens of the Paradise. He replied: Circles of glorifying Allah". See: Sunan At-Tirmidhy vol. 5, pp. 532 and Musnad Ahmad vol. 3, pp. 150, as part of the tradition narrated by Anas Bin Malik (may Allah be pleased with him). At-Tirmidhy commented saying: This tradition as transmitted through this chain of narration is Hasan Ghareeb.

Ibn Abdir-Barr said⁽¹⁾: "When it was the habit of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) to sit in that spot for people to sit around him to learn, he compared it to a garden due to the nobility of what is derived therein. Moreover, he attributed it to the Paradise because it leads one there. This is similar to his saying: (The Paradise lies under the shade of swords), meaning that spotting that place is one of the acts that will lead one to the Paradise"⁽²⁾.

However, the crass majority of scholars gave preference to the opinion that leaves the meaning in its actual sense and not metaphorical. Hence the spot stated in the noble tradition is a real part of the Paradise. Its case is similar to that of the black stone, river Nile and the Euphrates, or in the sense that it is an everlasting spot unlike other parts of the earth. On the Day of Resurrection it will be transformed into the Paradise to become one of its gardens just like the trunk that yearned for the noble prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him).

They further maintained that such thing is not beyond the Divine Power. All the traditions transmitted in this regard came without the article of comparison.

(1) At-Tamheed by Ibn Abdil-Barr vol.2, pp. 287.

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhary vol.3, pp. 1037 and Sahih Muslim vol.3, pp. 1362, Hadith no. 1390.

Hence, believing in the apparent implication of these traditions is more appropriate than trying to view them from the metaphorical sense which is not substantiated by any clue particularly when it is realized that approaching these traditions from the metaphorical perspective does away with the specific and exclusive excellence of this portion of land over other parts of the earth, while the text actually came to prove and evidence the virtue and special merit of this piece of land⁽¹⁾.

Ibn Abi Jamrah was par excellent in striking a compromise between these two opinions⁽²⁾ when he said⁽³⁾: "Though Allah knows best, the most sound opinion is to create rapport between the two since each of them is substantiated by evidence. As regard the fact that an act performed therein leads to the Paradise, it has been proven by the traditions that confirmed the virtuousness of the prophet's mosque and that the reward for any act of worship performed in it is multiplied. This portion has more merits over other parts of the Mosque. The argument regarding whether this portion is actually part of the Paradise has been proven by what the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) said that "the Sacred Pulpit is on the

(1) Subulul-Huda War-Rashaad vol. 12, pp. 349. See also: Fathul-Bary vol. 11, pp. 475.

(2) The opinion that worshipping in Ar-Rawdhah leads one to the Paradise and the other opinion that Ar-Rawdhah is actually a portion of the Paradise.

(3) As-Samhoody stated it in Wafa Al-Wafa vol. 2, pp. 163.

fountain tank (i.e. Al-Kauthar)" and no one argues that this statement is simple and clear in its apparent indication and that it is a tangible fact with respect to his lake-fount (blessings and peace of Allah be on him). Ibn Abi Jamrah further said: it has been confirmed, based on the Legal Principles of Islam, that information regarding holy sites or spots and the special blessings therein is not usually disclosed except for people to take them as places of excessive worship. Nonetheless, a third implication also remains a probability in the sense that this spot itself is a garden among the gardens of the Paradise just as the black stone is from the Paradise. Hence, the said spot is presently a garden among the gardens of the Paradise and it will remain like that as it is. Any one who does an act of worship in it will have a garden in the Paradise. This is the most sound opinion in view of the towering status of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) and for there to exist between him and the fatherhood of prophet Ibrahim a kind of similarity in the sense that when Allah granted the black stone exclusively to His chosen friend Ibrahim (peace be on him), our beloved prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) was

exclusively granted (Ar-Rawdhah) and both are parts of the Paradise".

Commenting on Ibn Abi Jamrah's statement, As-Samhoody said : "This statement is highly invaluable and it considers the text in its apparent indication since there is no cause to distract it from that. There is no great deal about that even though this portion of land is visible here on the surface of the earth because as long as Mankind remains on this earth he can never discover the realities of the world to come due to the heavy coverings that have been placed over his sight from viewing that unseen world. Allah knows best".

(1) Wafa Al-Wafa vol. 2, pp. 163. The author of Subulul-Huda transcribed it word for word in vol. 12, pp. 349-350

The Virtues of Ar-Rawdhah

Ample texts are narrated from the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) proving and elaborating the excellence of the Sacred Rawdhah. Some of them are:

1. Abdullah Bin Zaid Al-Maziny (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) said: "The position between my residence and my pulpit is a garden among the gardens of the Paradise" Agreed upon⁽¹⁾.
2. Abu Hurairah narrated that the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) said: "The position between my residence and my pulpit is a garden among the gardens of the Paradise and my pulpit is on my fountain tank (i.e. Al-Kauthar)" Agreed upon⁽²⁾. In Imam Ahmad's narration through a

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhary , the Book of the virtue of praying in the two Holy Mosques of Makkah and Madinah: chapter (Virtue of the position between the holy tomb and the Sacred Pulpit) Hadith no. 1137 and Sahih Muslim, the Book of Hajj (Pilgrimage), chapter (The position between the holy tomb and the Sacred Pulpit is a garden among the gardens of the Paradise) Hadith no. 1350.

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhary , the Book of the virtue of praying in the two Holy Mosques of Makkah and Madinah: chapter (Virtue of the position between the holy tomb and the Sacred Pulpit) Hadith no. 1138 and Sahih Muslim, the Book of Hajj (Pilgrimage), chapter (The position between the holy tomb and the Sacred Pulpit is a garden among the gardens of the Paradise) Hadith no. 1391.

sound chain of transmission the wording goes thus⁽¹⁾: "Indeed my pulpit is on a watercourse among the watercourses of the Paradise. The position between my Pulpit and my chamber is a garden among the gardens of the Paradise".

3. Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudry reported that Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) said: " My pulpit is on a watercourse among the watercourses of the Paradise and the position between the Pulpit and Aishah's chamber is a garden among the gardens of the Paradise". Transmitted by At-Tabaraany in Al-Awsat and so did At-Tahaawy⁽²⁾.
4. Jabir Bin Abdillah said: the messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) said: The position between my pulpit and my residence is a garden among the gardens of the Paradise and my pulpit is on a watercourse among the watercourses of the Paradise. Transmitted by Ahmad⁽³⁾.
5. Sahl Bin Sa'd (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) said: " The position between my

(1) Al-Musnad vol. 2, pp. 412, 534.

(2) Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat vol. 3, pp. 269, Hadith no. 3112.

(3) Musnad Ahmad vol. 3, pp. 389, Hadith no. 15224.

pulpit and my residence is a garden among the gardens of the Paradise and the feet of my pulpit are systematically disposed in the Paradise". Transmitted by Al-Baihaqy⁽¹⁾.

6. Ummu Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated that Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) said: " The position between my pulpit and my residence is a garden among the gardens of the Paradise and the feet of my pulpit are systematically disposed in the Paradise". This tradition is sound and it has been transmitted by Al-Humaidy in his Musnad⁽²⁾.

The Monuments of Ar-Rawdhah

There are several historical monuments in the Sacred Rawdhah with distinguishing position in the hearts of Muslims either because the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) has commended them and pointed out their special prominence or due to the fact that they relate with certain events that concern the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) . These monuments come in form of the holy Pulpit (Al-Mimbar), the Prayer Niche (Al-Mihrab) and the Columns.

(1) As-Sunan Al-Kubra vol. 5, pp. 247, Hadith no. 10068.

(2) Musnad Al-Humaidy vol. 1, pp. 139, Hadith no. 290.

One: The Holy Pulpit (Mimbar) of the Prophet

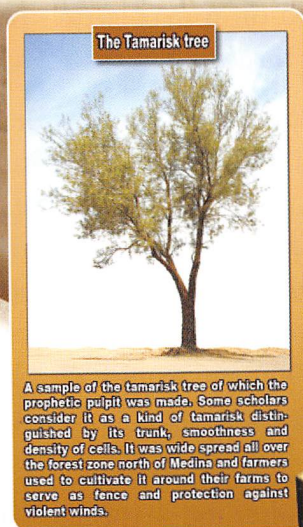
During the early years of the prophet's migration to Medinah he used to deliver sermon standing on the ground and resting on a palm trunk pillar along the Qiblah direction of the mosque. When the number of delegates that come to visit the Muslims increased, his noble companions (may Allah be pleased with them) viewed it necessary that the prophet should have an elevated place where he would stand to address the people in order for them to sight him clearly while they learn the tenets and teachings of their religion. As a result they sought his permission over that saying: "O' Allah's apostle, the number of people has indeed increased, so would you mind having something to stand on while addressing them so they can perceive you? He replied: As you will"⁽¹⁾.

Thereafter they built an elevated mud platform for him and placed it beside the pillar that was right in the Qiblah direction of the mosque. So whenever the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) gives sermon he would stand on it resting on the pillar beside it. In the fourth year of migration to Medinah, according to the most prominent opinion of the learned scholars, Tamim Ad-Dary (may Allah be pleased with him) noticed that the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) has grown older and heavier and that the

⁽¹⁾ At-Tabaqaat Al-Kubra vol. 1, pp. 250-251. See also: Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat vol. 11, pp. 447.

mud pulpit that was made for him no longer served the purpose for which it was built whereby the prophet was finding it very difficult while delivering sermon or standing on it to teach the people . So he said: O' Apostle of Allah, would you mind if we make for you a pulpit that can bear your body? He replied in the affirmative ⁽¹⁾ . Thereupon Sahl Bin Sa'd in the company of a carpenter belonging to one of the Ansar women named Maimoon went to the nearby bush in Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah environs, brought wood of tamarisk tree and made a pulpit for the prophet

(1) As-Sunan Al-Kubra of Al-Baihaqy vol. 3, pp. 195-196. Ibn Hajar said: Its chain of transmission is good. See: Fath Al-Bary vol. 2, pp. 398.



An approximate picture of the Prophetic Pulpit



(blessings and peace of Allah be on him). They placed the pulpit on the western side of the prophet's prayer zone (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) .

Historians describe this pulpit as one that is composed of two steps and another for sitting. It was two cubits or approximately one meter high above the ground. Its square width was one cubit or approximately half a meter square. The distance between the lower part of the feet of the pulpit and its knob is five spans of the hand and more. The length of his sit (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) is two spans of the hand and four fingers square. The width of its step is two spans of the hand while its length is one hand span. The length of the place where he used to rest his back (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) is two hand spans and more. It also contains three moving sticks.

The prophetic Pulpit remained as it was even after his death (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) . Abubakr (may Allah be pleased with him) used to stand on the second step of the pulpit whenever he gives sermon quite below the step where the prophet used to stand. When Umār Bin Al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him) delivers sermon he would stand on the step below that where Abubakr (may Allah be pleased with him) used to stand.

When Uthman Bin Affan became the caliph of the Muslims he did the same for a period of six years and then rose to the spot where the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) used to stand while giving the sermon.

During the caliphate of Mu'awiyah (may Allah be pleased with him) the governor of Medinah, Marwan Bin Al-Hakam added six steps to the prophetic Mimbar (pulpit) from below making its nine steps in all including the sitting position. He also added to both sides (the western and eastern sides) of it eighteen round openings. He mounted ten standing sticks on the position where the prophet used to rest his back (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) and placed the pulpit above a marble bench about one cubit or half a meter high above the ground. The one giving sermon used to stand on the seventh step which represents the first step of the old prophetic holy pulpit.

The holy pulpit remained like that for a long period until when the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mahdy came to Medinah in the year 161 AH and wanted to restore it to its previous condition. Then Imam Malik said to him the pulpit was made of tamarisk wood from the forest and it has been nailed and fastened to these sticks. So whenever we try to separate them we fear it may collapse and disintegrate. Hence, I do not approve that you restore it. So Al-Mahdy left it as it was.

Again in the year 654 AH there was a fire outbreak in the prophet's Mosque which set the pulpit into flames and thus the remains of the holy prophetic pulpit were also burnt. When the fire subsided people gathered the remains of the pulpit and placed them on the marble bench that was underneath it and erected a structure over it with red bricks.

Regarding the virtue of the Pulpit, a good number of sound traditions are transmitted. Imam Ahmad⁽¹⁾ and An-Nasa'ee⁽²⁾ narrated via a sound chain of transmission with the phraseology of the later on the authority of Ummu Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) that the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) said: "The feet of this pulpit of mine are systematically disposed in the Paradise".

Imam Ahmad⁽³⁾ and some others also narrated via a sound transmission chain on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the messenger of Allah said: "My pulpit is on a watercourse among the watercourses of the Paradise". Al-Bukhary⁽⁴⁾ and Muslim⁽⁵⁾ jointly transmitted on the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) said: "The position between my residence and my pulpit is a garden among the gardens of the Paradise and my pulpit is on my fountain tank (i.e. Al-Kauthar)".

On account of the greatness and nobility of this pulpit a severe disavowal has been pronounced against any one who makes a false and sinful oath by it. Imam Malik⁽⁶⁾ transmitted via a sound chain on the authority of Jabir Bin Abdillah (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) that Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) said: "Whoever makes a false oath on my pulpit should seek his seat in the Hellfire".

Following the incidence of the fire that consumed the

(1) Musnad Ahmad vol. 6, pp. 292, 318.

(2) Sunan An-Nasa'ee vol. 2, pp. 36.

(3) Musnad Ahmad vol. 2, pp. 360, 450.

(4) Previously referenced.

(5) Previously referenced.

(6) Al-Muwatta' vol.2, pp. 727.

pulpit the king of Yemen Al-Mudhaffar sent a new pulpit made of sandalwood to replace the old one. That was in the year 656 AH.

Thereafter, kings and Sultans contended with one another in sending new pulpits to be put in the sacred Rawdhah in place of the prophetic one. The last pulpit was sent by the Ottoman Sultan Murad in 998 AH. It was a very beautiful one covered by a charming dome made of alabaster and painted with beautiful almond colour. It was composed of twelve steps, three out of which were outside the entrance while the other nine were inside. Its door was made of trough wood. It had two shutters decorated with Islamic architectural decorations. Above it were book terraces and the word "La Ilaaha Illallaah Muhammadur-Rasulullaah" (There is no deity worthy of worship but Allah and Muhammad is Allah's apostle) was written on its middle part. This pulpit still exists today in the prophet's Mosque and the Saudi Arabian government is still taking good care of it. It continuously paints it with golden liquid whenever the necessity arises. Transparent sheets have been placed on it to preserve and protect it against direct contact with the hands and for it to remain a testimony to the acute Islamic art and one of its abiding great wonders.

Two: The Holy Prayer Niche (Mihrab) of the Prophet

The Mihrab as it is today was not known to be so during the prophetic era (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) . It had no distinct structure inside the mosque that distinguishes it from the other parts of the mosque. The Mihrab was known to be the spot where the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) used to stand to lead the Muslims in prayer. Learned scholars stated that the prophet had three prayer niches in his mosque:

First: The prayer niche where he used to lead the Muslims when the prayer direction (Qiblah) used to be towards Jerusalem. Al-Bukhary and Muslim⁽¹⁾ transmitted on the authority of Al-Baraa Bin 'Aazib (may Allah be pleased with him) that the messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) used to pray towards the direction of Jerusalem for sixteen or seventeen months and he used to wish that he is directed towards Al-Ka'bah. So Allah revealed:

﴿قَدْ رَأَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ﴾ (البقرة: ١٤٤)

Indeed We see the turning of your face to heaven (Al-Baqarah: 144) Thereafter, he turned towards Al-Ka'bah.

(1) Transmitted by Al-Bukhary in his Sahih vol. 1, pp. 155, Hadith no. 390, chapter on Turning towards the Qiblah wherever it was and Imam Muslim in his Sahih vol. 1, pp. 374, Hadith no. 525, under the chapter: Changing the Qiblah from Jerusalem to Al-Ka'bah after sixteen or seventeen months uncertain.

This prayer niche is positioned on the northern wall of the prophetic Mosque during his era, opposite the gate of Jibreel. It neither had a special structure nor an indication to point it out.

Second: The prayer niche which the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) later turned to after the changing of the Qiblah from Jerusalem to Al-Ka'bah in Makkah. This prayer niche is positioned on As-Sayyidah Aisha's column (may Allah be pleased with her). Some historians¹ stated that the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) stood there leading the Muslims in prayer for about ten and more days only.

Third: The present prophetic prayer niche as it is now which is situated beside the Scented Column (Ustuwanah Mukhallaqah). It is about fourteen cubits and one hand span away from the holy pulpit of the prophet. Between it and the wall of the sacred chamber is thirty eight cubits which is about nineteen meters, while it is about one and a half meter away from the wall of the Qiblah.

¹) Akhbar Al-Madinah by Ibn Zubaalah pp. 86.



The prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) assumed this prayer niche after leaving the second Mihrab and he continued to lead the Muslims in prayer therein till death overtook him. The first Caliph Abubakr (may Allah be pleased with him) then prayed in it throughout his life. Though, during the prophetic era and that of Abubakr As-Siddeeque, this Mihrab had no distinct structure that separates it from other parts of the mosque. Rather, the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) and his companion Abubakr (may Allah be pleased with him) used to lead people in prayer at this spot placing the southern wall of the mosque in front of them as sutrah.

During the reign of Al-Farooque Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) the prophetic mosque was expanded from the western, northern and southern parts. During this exercise, the southern wall of the mosque was destroyed and extended towards the Qiblah direction with about ten cubits (approximately five meters⁽¹⁾). So the Imam began to stand in the new southern expansion slightly in front of the prophetic prayer niche towards the direction of the Qiblah. Then the mosque was again expanded from the southern part during the reign of

(1) Wafa Al-Wafa vol. 2, pp. 239. Mustafa Luma'ey, who is one of the contemporary scholars, maintains that extension towards the Qiblah direction is about ten cubits (4.48m). See the book: Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah Tatawuruha Al-'Emraany, pp. 62.

Dhun-Nurain Uthman Bin Affan (may Allah be pleased with him). The distance between the standing spot of the Imam after the extension and the prophetic prayer niche then became eighteen cubits (about nine meters long).

During the reign of Al-Walid Bin Abdil Malik, the mosque was further extended from three sides- east, west and south and the Mihrab of Uthman remained in its place in the southern direction but for the first time in history the governor of Medinah Umar Bin Abdil-Aziz (may Allah be pleased with him) who was the supervisor of Al-Walid's construction project, built the standing spot of the Imam inside Uthman's prayer niche. The structure was concave and the Mihrab became the proper noun given to that spot.

The prophetic Mihrab had remained as it was only that when they wanted to carpet the Rawdhah with sand they mellowed the position of the prophetic prayer niche with marbles for preservation and left it as it was. In the course of time and increase of sand inside Ar-Rawdhah the prophetic Mihrab became quite lower than the other parts of Ar-Rawdhah. This is what As-Samhoody describes during his age in the following words saying: "Presently, it is more like a square basin which is descended into by a step of two and half cubits and one eighth long. Its width is two and half cubits

and one sixteenth. However, during the recent renovation after the fire outbreak, they have added to its length and width an area quite lower than one sixteenth cubit"⁽¹⁾.

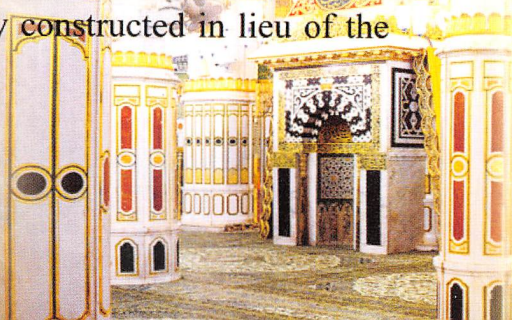
In 654 AH Ad-Zahir Baibars made a wooden prayer niche in the prayer spot of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) in form of a vaulted door. Ayatul-Kursy (Verse of the Chair – verse 255 of Surah Al-Baqarah) was written in it along the Qiblah direction. On its outer part, after the first verse of the holy Qur'an (Al-Basmalah), the following verse was written:

﴿ قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ ﴾ (البقرة: ١٤٤)

Indeed We see the turning of your face to heaven, so We shall surely turn you to a Qiblah which you shall like (Al-Baqarah: 144)

This prayer niche got burnt during the second fire outbreak that occurred in the prophet's mosque in 886 AH. When they began to renovate the mosque in 888 AH they started removing the sand and soil layers from the floor of the mosque till they arrived at the level of the prayer spot of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him). Then they constructed in lieu of the

(1) Wafa Al-Wafa, vol. 2, pp. 94.



burnt wooden prayer niche another one made of coloured marbles with magnificent decorations.

This prayer niche is still available today. Written on it is: "This is the prayer spot of the messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) ".

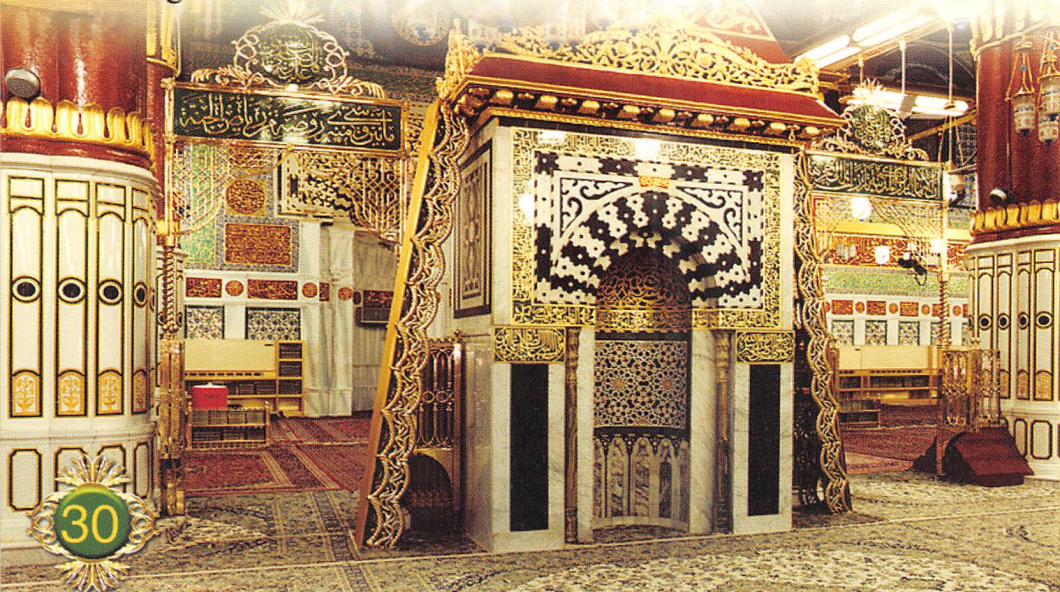
During the subsequent ages many amendments and renovations have been made in it to include:

Its renovation during the era of Sultan Abdul Majeed in 1266 AH and the attachment of two wooden cones to its top. Bronze steps were also placed on its both sides for kindling the light candles.

It was also renovated in 1336 AH by Fakhry Baasha who was then the Mayor of Medinah.

In 1392 AH, Saudi government gave it another renovation and decoration. Again in 1404 AH it further gave it better and greater renovations by supporting it by reinforced concrete cement from within and covering it with marbles from outside in accordance with the ancient styles of decoration without making any alterations to its original size. However, the two pillars opposite the prayer niche were replaced with other two marble pillars while the plaques behind the prayer niche were renewed and the date of renewal was also written on them.

Note: Some people believe that while seeking to stand on the prayer spot of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) one has to totally leave the surroundings of the prayer niche to stand on its right angle right in front of the statement written on it: "This is the prayer spot of the messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be on him)". This is not correct because Muslims have accurately preserved and demarcated the standing spot of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him). Though when the present Mihrab was mounted it became wider than the actual standing spot of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him). This expansion occurred only in the eastern side of it. Hence, if one wants to precisely spot the prayer position of Allah's apostle, he has to stand inside the prayer niche but slightly towards the right side. Allah knows best.





Three: The Columns (Pillars)

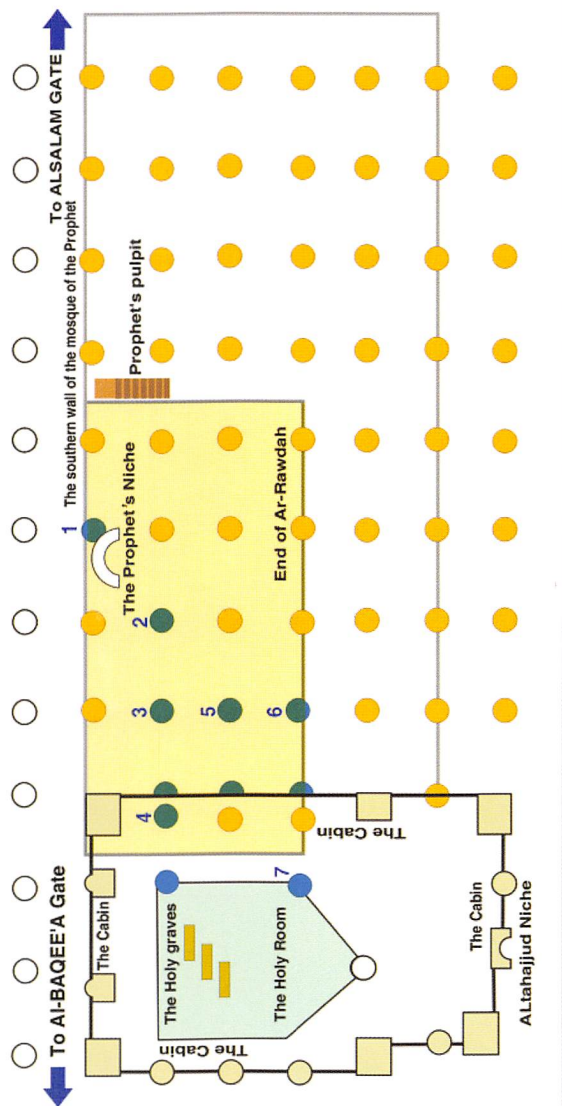
During the era of prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) there used to be twenty seven columns in the mosque towards the Qiblah direction. All were made from palm trunks and they had remained like that till the expansion of Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) who replaced them with sculptured stones. All expansions done to the mosque throughout the ages preserved the positions of these columns particularly the famous ones among them that are situated in the Sacred Rawdhah and those whose names were related with recorded events in the books of history and prophetic traditions. Some of these prominent columns include:



famous Columns sites in Ar-Rawdah

Ottoman Niche

Ascribed to Othman bin Affan (may Allah be pleased with him)



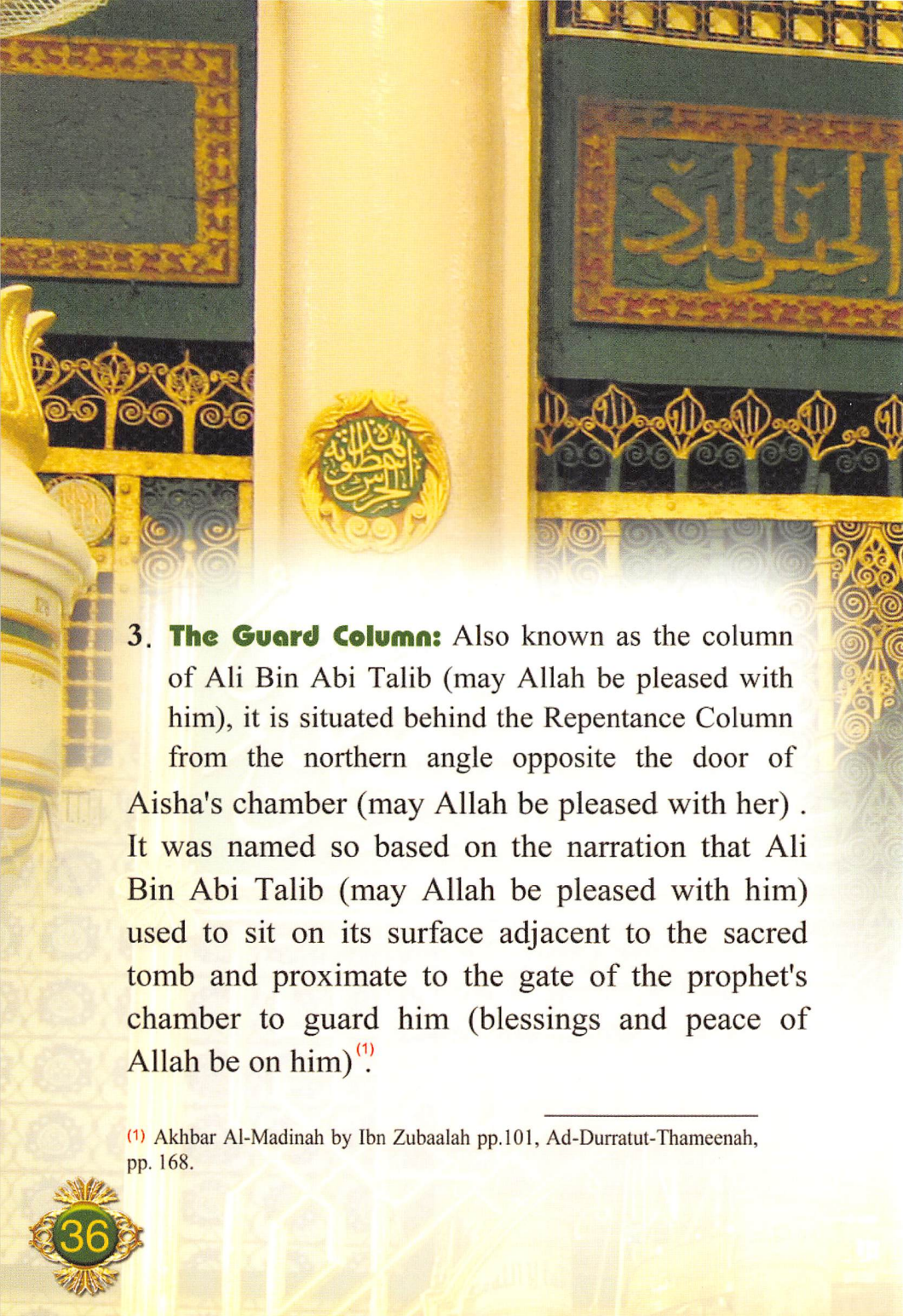
- 1 The Scented Column 2 As-Sayyidah Aisha's Column 3 Repentance Column 4 The Bed Column 5 The Guard Column 6 The Delegates' Column 7 Murabba'ul-Qabr Column

1. **The Scented Column (Al-Mukhallaqah):** It is positioned and attached to the Qiblah direction of the prophetic prayer niche due to its concaveness from the right direction. It is called Al-Mukhallaqah because it used to be smeared with perfume. Written above it is the word: "This is the Scented Column" and it is the milestone that marks the prayer spot of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) .

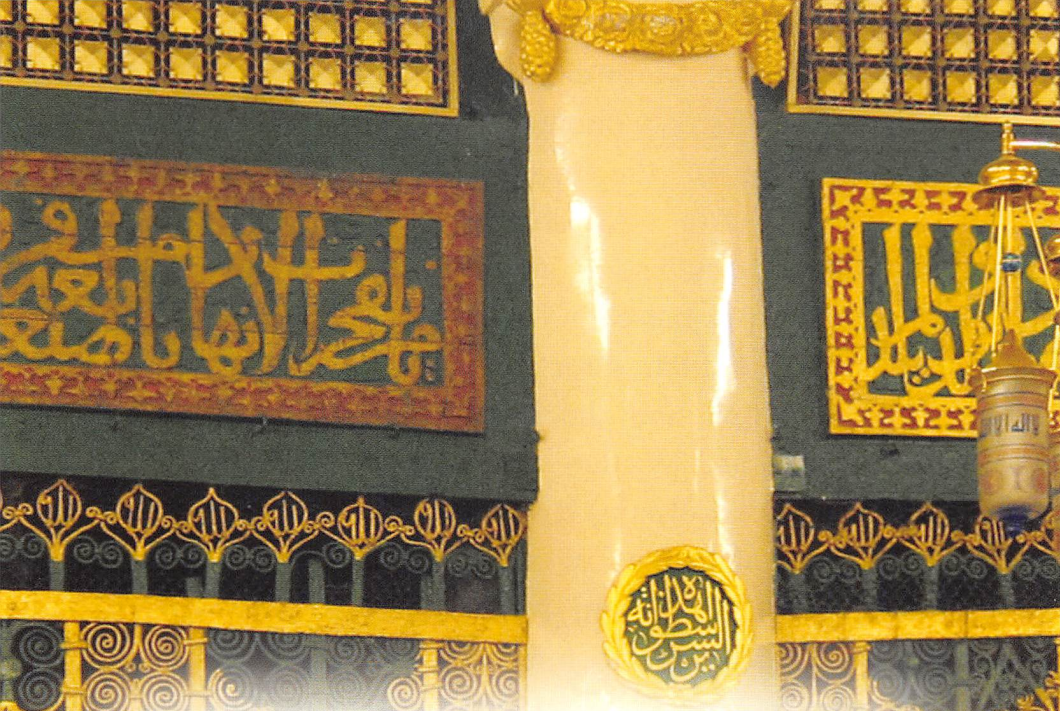




2. **As-Sayyidah Aisha's Column** (may Allah be pleased with her): Also called the Emigrants' Column or Al-Qur'ah Column, it is situated amid Ar-Rawdhah. It is the third column from the Qiblah direction, the holy pulpit and the third from the sacred tomb. Written above it is (This is As-Sayyidah Aisha's Column). The prophet prayed towards it for ten nights or more after the alteration of his prayer direction. Then he turned to his popular Qiblah direction as it is known today. Because As-Sayyidah Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) was the person that brought its virtues to the attention of many children of the companions of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) it was named after her.

- 
3. **The Guard Column:** Also known as the column of Ali Bin Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him), it is situated behind the Repentance Column from the northern angle opposite the door of Aisha's chamber (may Allah be pleased with her) . It was named so based on the narration that Ali Bin Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) used to sit on its surface adjacent to the sacred tomb and proximate to the gate of the prophet's chamber to guard him (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) ⁽¹⁾.

(1) Akhbar Al-Madinah by Ibn Zubaalah pp.101, Ad-Durratut-Thameenah, pp. 168.



4. **The Bed Column:** It is situated inside the compartment eastwards the Repentance Column and attached to the window of the sacred chamber. It is different from the apparent column viewed on the wall of the compartment on which the words (This is the Bed Column) are written. This is a semi-column that was innovated during the era of Al-Ashraf Qaitbay when he built a dome over the sacred chamber of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him). These words were written on this column due to its attachment to it. It is named after the prophet's bed that was usually placed on that spot whenever he goes there for seclusion (I'tikaaf).

5. **Repentance Column (Taubah):** It is also called Abu Lubabah's Column a name after the great companion of the prophet Bashir Bin Abdil-Mundhir Abu Lubabah Al-Ansaary. It is positioned adjacent to As-Sayyidah Aisha's column from the east. It is also the third column from the Qiblah direction, the fourth from the sacred pulpit and the second column from the sacred tomb. Written above it is (This is the Repentance Column).It was named the repentance or Abu Lubabah's Column because Abu Lubabah tied himself to it and remained there till Allah granted repentance to him as it will be discussed under the events of Ar-Rawdhah. Some historians¹ state that most of the prophet's supererogatory prayers (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) were said towards its direction.

6. **The Delegates' Column:** It is positioned behind the Guard Column from the northern direction. It was called so because the messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) used to sit there to receive delegates that come to meet with him. Moreover, as the senior and honorable companions of the prophet used to sit there also it was nicknamed the collar sit.

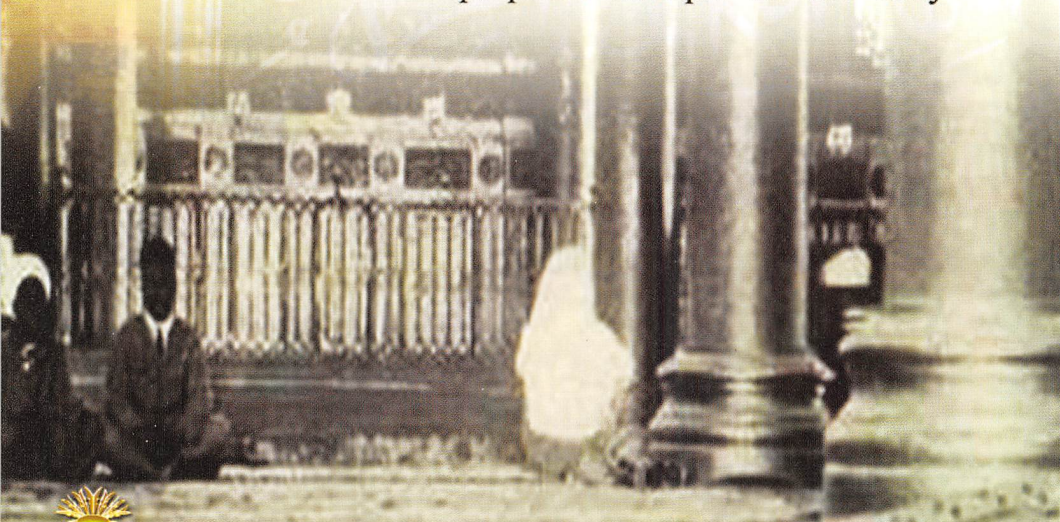
Note: Mistakenly, the titles (The Guard Column) and (The Delegates' Column) have been written on the columns opposite to these two from the eastern direction. This mistake was proven by Al-Barzanjy and some other scholars⁽¹⁾.

7. Murabba'atul-Qabr Column: It is also known as Maqam Jibreel Column (blessings and peace be on him). It is positioned on the same line with the Delegates' Column from the eastern direction inside the compartment within a partition built by Umar Bin Abdul-Aziz on the sacred chamber while expanding the prophet's mosque during the reign of Al-Walid Bin Abdil Malik. This column is situated on the door spot of As-Sayyidah Fatimah's residence (may Allah be pleased with her).

(1) See: Nuzhatun-Naazhireen pp. 162-164. Ayyub Sabry Basha transcribed this information in his book titled "Mawsu'atu Mir'aat Al-Haramain As-Shareefain vol. 2, pp. 237-238".

History of the Construction of Ar-Rawdhah

The history of the construction of the sacred Rawdhah is connected with the construction of the holy mosque of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him). During the early construction of the mosque in the first year of migration by the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) and his noble companions, it absolutely comprised of the Rawdhah. Though it was not known by this name except after the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) announced that the portion that extends from As-Sayyidah Aisha's chamber (may Allah be pleased with her) to the sacred Pulpit is a garden of the gardens of the Paradise. Despite this information the sacred Rawdhah never became very distinct throughout the expansions that were made to the prophet's mosque in the early





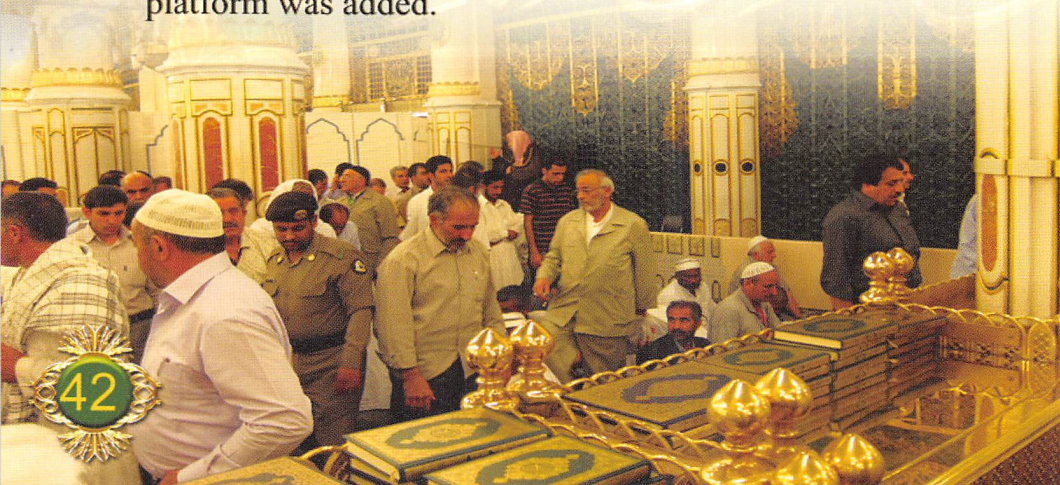
centuries of the Islamic epoch. It was not distinguished from other parts of the mosque through any construction or carpeting. The attention given to it was part of the attention given to the mosque as a whole in general. So any renovation or construction that was made inside the holy prophet's mosque included the sacred Rawdhah also in one way or the other. During the era of Umar Bin Al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him) Ar-Rawdhah was renovated along with the renovation exercise that went round the whole mosque in the year 17 AH. Similarly was the renovations that took place during the reigns of Uthman Bin Affan (may Allah be pleased with him) in

29AH, and Al-Walid Bin Abdil Malik by the Mayor of Medinah then in the person of Umar Bin Abdil Aziz between 88-91 AH.

In 686 AH Sultan Ad-Zhahir Baibars constructed a compartment above the prophetic chamber covering a part of the sacred Rawdhah.

During the reign of Sultan An-Nasir Muhammad Bin Qalawun in 701 AH some renovations were made in Ar-Rawdhah due to some defects in its roof. Then in the year 853 AH it was renovated again by the governor Bardbeg At-Tajy, the architect.

On 13 Ramadan, 886 AH there was fire outbreak in the holy mosque of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) which caused a very great damage to the roof of Ar-Rawdhah. So Sultan Qaitbay gave instructions for its renovation which were implemented. It was reconstructed and raised high above the ground with about eleven meters. A marble platform was also built for the Muaddhin inside Ar-Rawdhah. During the Ottoman era another Muddhin's platform was added.



The Ottoman sultans cared so much about the prophet's mosque during their reign particularly the area called Ar-Rawdhah wherein it was completely marbled along with its pillars. It was also carpeted with different kinds of expensive carpets.

During the Majeedy construction of the prophet's mosque the prophetic prayer niche in the Rawdhah was recoated with gold and lapis lazuli. Above some domes of the Rawdhah, some windows and hoops were opened. However, the Saudi Arabian renovations have also kept and preserved the Majeedy renovations of the Rawdhah, supported its pillars with metal belts, painted parts of the pillars that were not marbled, in white, carpeted the floor with expensive carpets, removed one of the two Adhan platforms and built a new squared white marbled and well decorated structure for the Muaddhin to amplify and diffuse the voice of the Imam to the worshippers all over the mosque. This structure was quite higher than the previous one.

Today Ar-Rawdhah and other parts of the prophet's mosque still remain under the special care and attention of the government of the Custodian of the two Holy Mosques.

Some Events that took place in Ar-Rawdhah

Ancient authorities state a lot of events that occurred in the sacred Rawdhah. Some are stated in the books of authentic traditions while others are transmitted in the books of history and prophetic biography. Nonetheless, I am going to mention only but a few of the prominent events that occurred in the sacred Rawdhah as stated by the authorities:

The Palm Trunk Yearns for the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him)

Al-Bukhary transmitted on the authority of Jabir Bin Abdillah (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) that the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) used to stand by a tree or a date-palm on Friday. Then an Ansary woman or man said. "O Allah's Apostle! Shall we make a pulpit for you?" He replied, "If you wish". So they made a pulpit for him. When it was Friday, he proceeded towards the pulpit (for delivering the sermon). The date-palm cried like a child! The Prophet descended (the pulpit) and embraced it while it continued moaning like a child being placated"⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Sahih Al-Bukhary, chapter (Signs of prophet hood in Islam) Hadith no. 3391. In some narration it came that: the trunk was sad and sending a sound like that of a pregnant she-camel. In another narration: When he passed by the trunk it cried thrice like a cow until people became scared and some even stood up on their feet to flee.

Abu Lubabah's Repentance **(may Allah be pleased with him)**

When Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) laid a siege against the Jewish people of Banu Quraizah after the crime they perpetrated against him in the battle of the confederates (Allies) in 5 AH and the siege became very strong and severe, they sent a message to Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) to send them Abu Lubabah Bin Abdil Mundhir, who was a brother to Banu 'Amr Bin 'Awf, who were allies to the tribe of Aws, to seek his counsel regarding their affairs. When they sighted him the men stood up to him while the women and children burst into tears. So Abu Lubabah felt sympathy for them and they said to him: Do you see that we obey the law and government of Muhammad O' Abu Lubabah? He replied: Yes of course but he pointed to his neck that it is only but slaughtering in case they disobey. Abu Lubabah said: By Allah! I couldn't move my feet before I realized that I have betrayed Allah and his messenger. Then he moved straight to the mosque and tied himself to one of its pillars saying: I won't leave my place until Allah grants me repentance for what I have done he also made a covenant with Allah never to land his feet on the ground of Banu Quraizah again saying: 'Allah will never see me in a land where I betrayed Him and His messenger'. When his case reached to the messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) who noticed that he had delayed

coming back to him, he said: Had he come to me frankly I would have sought forgiveness for him. But since he has already done what he did I will not be the one to set him free from his place unless Allah grants repentance to him. Ummu Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) said : I heard Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) laughing during the early hours of the morning and I asked him: what causes your laughter O' Allah's apostle? May Allah fill you with happiness. He replied: Abu Lubabah has been granted repentance. Then I said: Shall I give him the glad tidings O' Allah's apostle? He replied: of course. So she stood on the door of her room, before the law of Hijab was imposed on women and said: O Abu Lubabah! Be glad; for Allah has granted you forgiveness. The people rushed to set him free but he said: No by Allah! But Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) will be the one to set me free by his own hands. So when the prophet passed by him in the morning while going to observe the Fajr prayer he set him free⁽¹⁾ and this verse was revealed on his account.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوا أَمْنَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

(سورة الأنفال: ٢٧)

O you who believe !betray not Allah and the Messenger, nor misappropriate knowingly, things entrusted to you (Al-Anfal: 27).

(1) Taarikh At-Tabary vol. 2, pp. 248, Tafseer Al-Baghawyy vol. 6, pp. 341..

The Delegates of Banu Tamim

When Makkah was conquered in the eight year of migration to Medinah and Allah granted tremendous victory to the Muslims, Arab delegates began to troop into Medinah one after the other to the extent that the ninth year was named the Year of Delegates. The prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) was used to receiving them in a special place inside Ar-Rawdhah to the extent that the particular column on that spot became known as the Delegates' Column.

Banu Tamim tribe was one of those delegates whose mention has something to do with Ar-Rawdhah. They came to Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) in the year 9 AH to brag and challenge him. In their midst were some nobilities of the tribe of Tamim like Utaarid Bin Hajib, Al-'Aqra' Bin Habis, Az-Zibriqaan Bin Badr, 'Uyainah Bin Hisn and others. When they entered the mosque they called upon Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) loudly from behind the private chambers to come out to them, which was a mistreatment to the person of prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be on him). When he came to them they said: O' Muhammad we have come to challenge and brag before you, so permit our poet and orator to speak. So

he permitted their orator to speak. When he had concluded his speech, Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) instructed Thabit Bin Qais Al-Khazrajy (may Allah be pleased with him) to respond to them and he rejoined them with a more eloquent and wisdom oriented speech. Then Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) permitted their poet to speak and when he concluded, he instructed his poet Hassan Bin Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him) to rejoin to him and he responded with a poem that rendered them inarticulate and incapacitated. After saying his poem, Al-'Aqra' Bin Habis said: By my father! This man is indeed inspired; for his orator is more eloquent than ours, his poet is wiser than ours and their voices are louder than ours. Thereafter the people embraced Islam and the messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) granted them valuable gifts⁽¹⁾. It is on their account that these verses were revealed:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَنَادُونَكَ مِنْ وَرَاءِ الْحُجُرَاتِ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ * وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوا
حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ إِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾
(الحجرات: ٤ - ٥)

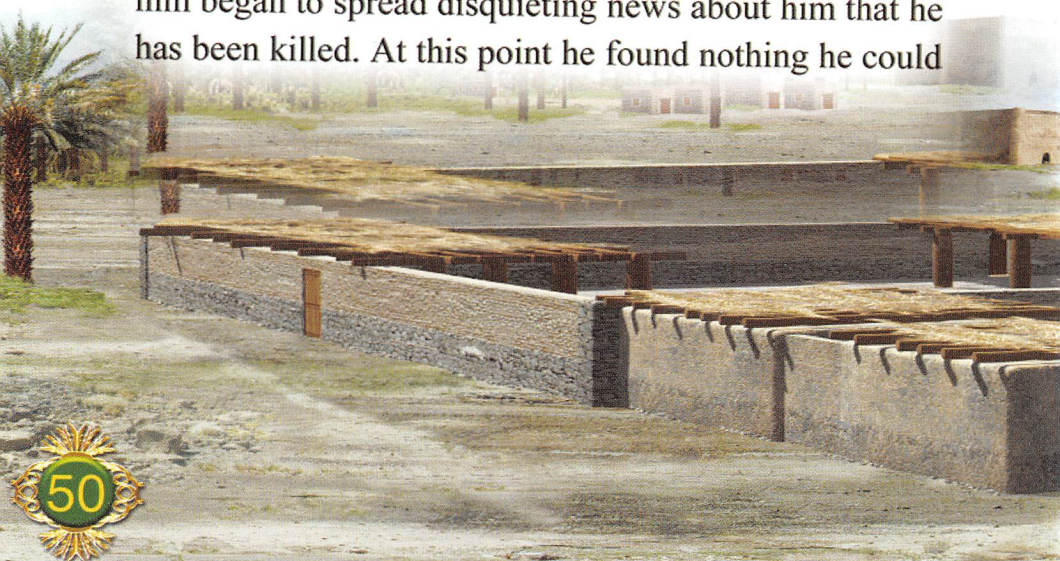
As for those who call out to you from behind the private chambers, surely most of them do not understand. And if they wait patiently until you come out to them, it would certainly be better for them, and Allah is most-Forgiving, most-Merciful. (Al-Hujuraat: 4-5).

⁽¹⁾ Taarikh At-Tabary vol. 2, pp. 380.



Ka'b Bin Zuhair Embraces Islam

In the eight year after migration to Medinah and the prophet's return from the battle of Ta'if, Bujair Bin Zuhair who was at that time a Muslim, wrote to his brother Ka'b informing him that Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) has slain some men in Makkah for abusing and maltreating him and that any one that is left of the Quraish poets had fled in all directions. So, if you intend anything in your mind you should flee to the messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) for he does not kill anyone that comes to him in repentance and acceptance of Islam. But if you refuse doing that find a place for your safety. When this letter reached to Ka'b he was grieved, found the earth seemed constrained to him and felt a pity for himself as the enemies around him began to spread disquieting news about him that he has been killed. At this point he found nothing he could



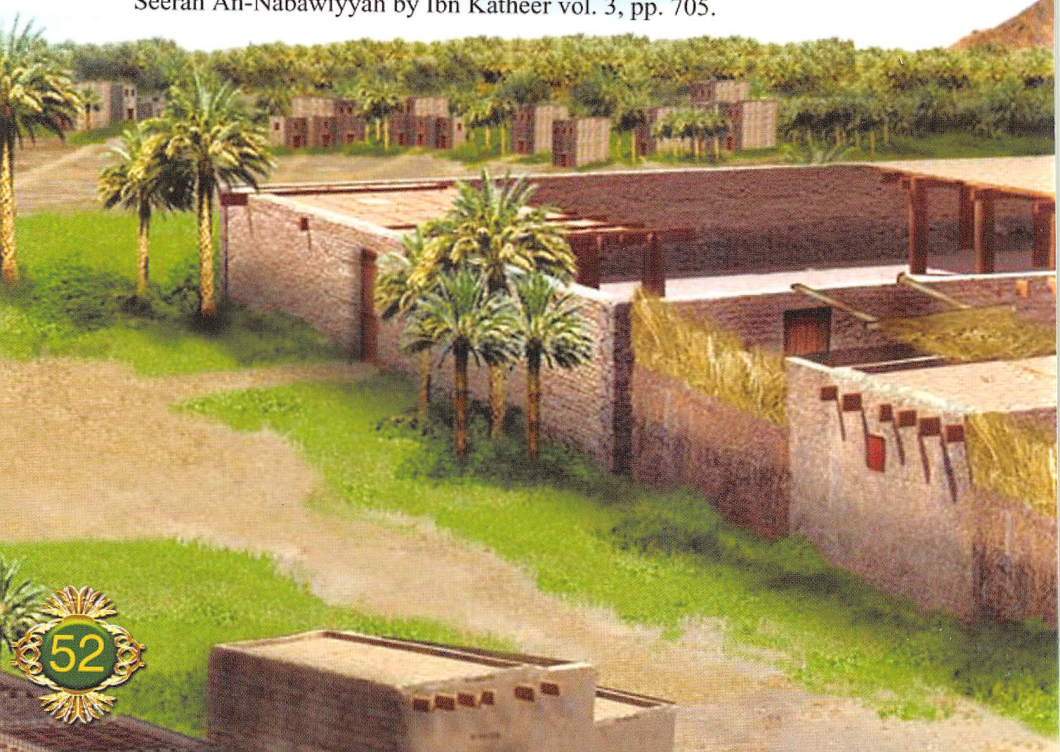
do than to compose a poem in which he praised the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him), stated his fear and the disquieting news his tale bearing enemies were spreading about him. Then he went to Medina and put up with a man who was known to him from the tribe of Juhainah. In the morning ,the man took him to Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) before the morning prayer and he prayed with him. After the prayer the man from Juhainah showed the messenger of Allah to Ka'b by pointing at him saying: This is the messenger of Allah. Get up to him and seek his protection and Ka'b did as he was instructed, sat closer to Allah's apostle and placed his palm on his palm. Though the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) did not know him before. Then Ka'b said: O' Allah's apostle, in fact Ka'b Bin Zuhair has come to you seeking your protection, repentance and to embrace Islam. Would you accept of him if I bring him to you? Allah's apostle



(blessings and peace of Allah be on him) replied: Yes of course. There upon he said I am Ka'b Bin Zuhair O' messenger of Allah. Then Ka'b recited the poem in which he praised the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him), stated his fear and the disquieting news his tale bearing enemies were spreading about him. Though he started the poem with the usual Arab poetic style of (Tashbeeb) whereby the poet begins by rhapsodizing. The first line of the poem was:


Su'ad has been separated and so my heart is sicken and enthralled by her. It has gotten into shackles and refused to be redeemed .⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ Zaad Al-Ma'ad by Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah vol. 3, pp. 520-522, As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah by Ibn Katheer vol. 3, pp. 705.



Some narrations state that when Ka'b concluded singing his poem, the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) put off his garment, gave it to him and the poem was due to this reason named Al-Burdah (The Garment)⁽¹⁾.

(1)As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah by Ibn Katheer vol. 3, pp. 707.



*Su'ad has been separated and
so my heart is sicken and
enthralled by her. It has
gotten into shackles and
refused to be redeemed*

Abul-'Aas Bin Ar-Rabee' seeks refuge with Zainab the daughter of Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him)

The episode of Abul-'Aas Bin Ar-Rabee'⁽¹⁾ seeking refuge with Zainab the daughter of Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) is one of the narrations relating to the events that took place in Ar-Rawdhah. Abur-Rabee' was one of those captured and arrested by the Muslims in the battle of Badr. When he was emancipated, he pledged to the messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) to send his wife Zainab to him in Medinah which he did. So As-Sayyidah Zainab migrated to Medina while Abur-Rabee' remained in Makkah.

Towards the end of the sixth year of migration to Medinah Abur-Rabee' traveled out to Great Syria (Sham) in a business trip for himself and for the tribe of Quraish. On his way back he passed very close to Medinah in the company of some hundred camels and one hundred and seventy men. One of the brigades of the messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah

⁽¹⁾ His name is Abul-'Aas Bin Ar-Rabee' Bin Abdil-'Uzza Bin Abdi-Shams Bin Abdi Manaf Al-Qurashy Al-'Abshamy. His mother is called Haalah Bint Khuwailid. She is a sister to Ummul-Mu'mineen Khadijah Bint Khuwailid (may Allah be pleased with her). Abul-'Aas was one of the few prominent men of the Quraish tribe in terms of wealth, trust and business. He was also an in-law to the messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) as he married his daughter Zainab (may Allah be pleased with her). See: Al-Istee'aab Fi Ma'rafatil-Ashaab vol. 4, pp. 464.

be on him) suddenly surfaced, took the camels and captured the men though Abul-'Aas could escape and entered Medinah in the dark seeking the house of As-Sayyidah Zainab (may Allah be pleased with her) for her protection which Zainab did.

When Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) went out to observe the Fajr prayer, said the opening Takbeer and the worshippers behind him had done the same, Zainab shouted out from the women's row saying: O Mankind! I am Zainab Bint Muhammad and I have granted protection to Abul-'Aas, so be in his protection. When the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) concluded the prayer he turned to the people and said: "Did you hear what I have heard? They replied: Yes of course O' messenger of Allah. Thereupon he said: I swear by He in whose hands is my soul, I had no knowledge of that until I heard what you have heard and in deed even the least member among the Muslims can grant protection". Then he left for his house and said to his daughter: Make Abul-'Aas' stay with us honourable but never allow him to come near to you and know that you are no longer lawful to him as a wife. Then he summoned the brigade men who have taken the camels and captured the men saying to

them: This man is one of us as you are aware and you have confiscated his wealth. If you be kind to him and return back his wealth that is what we hope and desire but if you refuse then it is a free booty granted by Allah unto you and you have every right to it. They replied: We will rather return back his wealth to him O' messenger of Allah. When Abul-'Aas came to get back his wealth they said: O' Abul-'Aas! You are honoured among the Quraish and you are a nephew and in-law to the messenger of Allah. Why don't you embrace Islam so that we would give back all this wealth to you and you will enjoy all this wealth of the people of Makkah you have with you while you remain in our midst in Medinah? He replied: How bad is that which you invite me to do; to begin my new faith with treachery?⁽¹⁾

Abul-'Aas sent the camels of the people of Makkah to them and announced his Islam before the Quraish. After that he migrated to Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) in Medinah and his wife was returned back to him. He used to say about the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) : He spoke to me and was truthful in his speech. He promised me and was loyal in his promise⁽²⁾.

(1) Siyar 'A'laam An-Nubalaa by Ad-dhahaby, vol. 1, pp. 330, Al-Isaabah Fi Tamyeezis-Sahaabah by Ibn Hajar, vol. 4, pp. 121.

(2) Zaad Al-Ma'ad by Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah vol. 3, pp. 520-522, As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah by Ibn Katheer vol. 3, pp. 705.

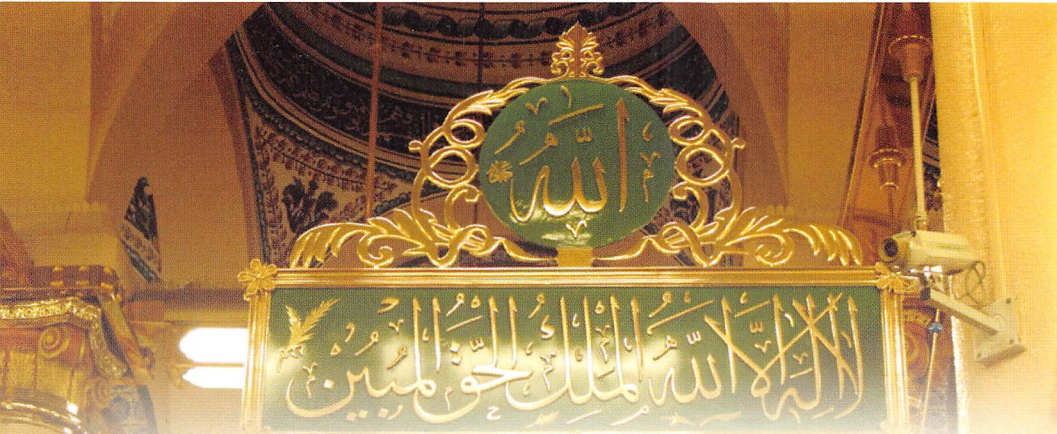
Intellectual Learning Sessions in the sacred Rawdhah

The prophet's holy mosque is the first common and open school known to the Arabs. It is the place where generations were given sound education and training as the messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) was the first teacher in this school. Throughout his era, he never failed to direct the inclinations of people, correct their behaviors, give admonition or sanction a legislation while standing on his Pulpit or sitting in his prayer niche inside (Ar-Rawdhah) which is the most preeminent spot in his Sacred Mosque.

He (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) used to exhort his companions to learn and teach others in the mosque saying: Whoever enters this mosque of mine to learn some good or teach it to others is in the position of one fighting in the cause of Allah ⁽¹⁾.

He also addressed Ahlus-Suffah saying: "Which of you would like to go out every morning to Buthan or al-'Aqiq and bring two large she-camels without being guilty of sin or without severing the ties of kinship? We said: Messenger of Allah, we would like to do it. Upon this he said: Does not one of you go out in the morning to the mosque and teach or recite two verses from the

(1) Kanzul-'Ummaal vol. 10, pp. 165.



Book of Allah, the Majestic and Glorious? That is better for him than two she-camels, and three verses are better (than three she-camels), and four verses are better for him than four (she-camels), and to their number in camels "⁽¹⁾.

Within the short period of regular attendance of the study circles organized by the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) in his holy Mosque a good number of his noble companions (may Allah be pleased with them) excelled in various sciences and began to assist him in teaching the new reverts, the delegates that come to him and others. Ibn 'Asakir narrated on the authority of 'Ubadah Bin As-Saamit (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: "Allah's apostle used to be preoccupied. So when an emigrant arrives to him he would direct him to one of us to teach him the holy Qur'an"⁽²⁾.

Some of the most prominent teaching pioneers of the

(1) Sahih Muslim, the book of The travelers prayer, chapter on the excellence of reciting the Qur'an in prayer and learning it, vol. 1, pp. 553.

(2) Mukhtasar Taarikh Dimashq by Bishr Bin Abdillahi Bin Yasaar As-Sulamy vol. 5, pp. 209.

prophet's mosque during his era (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) are Abdullah Bin Rawahah, Ubayy Bin Ka'b, 'Ubadah Bin As-Saamit, Sa'd Bin Ar-Rabee', Bashir Bin Sa'd Bin Tha'labah, Aban Bin Sa'eed Bin Al-'Aas and others. Abdullah Bin Rawahah Al-Ansaary (died 8 AH) was famous for representing the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) when he had left his sitting position in the mosque. He would assemble the people, remind them of Allah and explain to them what they have learnt from Allah's apostle. The prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) might appear before them during this exercise and they would keep silent but he would only sit with them and instruct them to carry on what they were learning saying: this is what I have been ordered to do⁽¹⁾.

After the death of Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) the noble companions (may Allah be pleased with them) carried on the regular attendance of the study circles in the holy Mosque and the sacred Ar-Rawdhah. A good number of their children also joined them in the learning process and excelled in the courses. Like this the holy mosque of the prophet and the sacred Rawdhah became replete with series of intellectual study circles. Ibn Sa'd transmitted on the authority of Jundab Bin Abdillah Al-Bajaly that he said: I arrived Medinah seeking knowledge and I entered the holy mosque of Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) and found the people in circles discussing. I continued to move from one circle

(1) At-Taraa'eeb Al-Idaariyyah by Al-Kattaany vol. 1, pp. 221.

to the other until I arrived at a circle wherein there was an old pale man and I sat with him. After he had delivered what he could he stood up to take his leave. Thereupon I asked after him and they told me that this is the master of the Muslims by name: Ubayy Bin Ka'b⁽¹⁾. He used to teach in some study circles more than one kind of science.

'Ataa said: I have never seen a study circle nobler, more educating and larger in attendance than that of Ibn Abbas. Memorizers of the holy Qur'an come to ask him questions, lovers of poems come to ask him, students of Arabic grammar interrogate him and all come and go away in a broad perspective⁽²⁾. A similar case was also transmitted about Ibn Shihaab Az-Zuhry⁽³⁾.

Abu Hurairah used to organize his study circle on Friday specifically by the holy prophetic Pulpit to convey the traditions of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) to people. Al-Hakim transmitted via his transmission chain on the authority of 'Aasim Bin Muhammad via his father that he said:

(1) Ibn Sa'd in At-Tabaqaat (Liden print) vol. 3, pp. 61. The most sound opinion as confirmed is that Jundab's arrival at Medinah was in 32AH based on the evidence that he attended the funeral of Ubayy Bin Ka'b according to what Ibn Sa'd stated in another portion of the above cited text.

(2) Al-Ma'refah Wat-Taarikh by Al-Basawy, vol. 1, pp. 512, Al-Isaabah (Abdullah Bin Abbas' biography) vol. 2, pp. 323.

(3) Al-Ma'refah Wat-Taarikh, vol. 1, pp. 623.

"Every Friday, I would see Abu Hurairah come out, get hold of the Pulpit's knobs while standing and say: The Truthful and Trusted One (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) told us that....He would continue to report what he had learnt from the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) until he hears the door of the compartment being opened for the Imam to come into the mosque for prayer and then he would sit down"⁽¹⁾.

During these intellectual study circles that were organized by the noble companions (may Allah be pleased with them) in the holy mosque of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) in general and the sacred Rawdhah in particular a good number of the Taabi'een (the succeeding generation of the Sahaabah) excelled and became genius in the fields of teaching and passing legal opinions right in the era of the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them). Some of these distinguished scholars include: Ali Bin Al-Husain Bin Abi Talib (died 94 AH), Sulaiman Bin Yasaar (died 107 AH), Muhammad Bin Yahya Bin Hibban (died 121 AH)⁽²⁾, Abuz-Zinaad Abdullah Bin

(1) He is Al-Hakim An-Naisaabury, Abu Abdillah Muhammad Bin Abdillah who died in (405AH). See his book of Hadith: Al-Mustadrak 'Alas-Sahihain, vol. 3, pp. 512, An-Nasr Al-Hadith publications and Bookshop, Riyadh, Hayaatus-Sahaabah by Al-Kandahlawy, vol. 3, pp. 243.

(2) At-Tabaqat by Khalifah, pp. 258.

Dhakwaan (died 130 AH)⁽¹⁾, Abdullah Bin Abi Bakr Bin 'Amr Bin Hazm (died 135 AH), his brother Muhammad Bin Abibakr (died 132 AH)⁽²⁾ and Rabee'ah Bin Abi Abdir-Rahman (died 136 AH) who is popularly known as Rabee'atur-Ra'y.

This is how the intellectual life continued generation after generation in the sacred Rawdhah. As-Sakhawy stated in his book: "At-Tuhfatul-Latweefah" that Aishah's Column (may Allah be pleased with her) was the sitting place for those interested in reading Hadith while the Bed Column was the sitting place of Imam Malik Bin Anas (may Allah confer His mercy on him).

Ibn Rasheed (who died before 721 AH) states in one of his trips to Medinah in (684 AH) that he met with Ummul-Khair Fatimah Al-Bataa'ehiyyah and studied under her while she was resting on one side of the porticos of Ar-Rawdhah that was towards the head position of the holy prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him), in a spot between his grave and his pulpit. He also learnt from Abu Muhammad Az-Zajjaajy and Abul-Qasim Az-Zajjaajy who were both from Baghdad. He demarcates the position of their

(1) pp. 319. His biography will come later in page 230.

(2) At-Tabaqat by Khalifah, pp. 264. Al-Busty is Muhammad Bin Hibban Bin Ahmad (died 354AH). See: Mashaaher 'Ulamaaul-Amsaar, pp. 128, published by Flashmehr in Cairo, 1959CE.

study circle to be the boundary of the main interior wall of the prophet's mosque before the extension. This is what he explains here: "While we could sight the sacred Rawdhah, it was a blessed and holy sitting spot which we hope to get its immense reward and profound virtues from Allah" ⁽¹⁾.

Many learned scholars used to target this spot on beginning to write or conclude any of their books seeking the blessings of Ar-Rawdhah. Some prominent ones among these scholars are:

Imam Muhammad Bin Isma'eel Al-Bukhary (died 265AH). He authored his book (Sahih Al-Bukhary) in the immaculate prophetic Rawdhah ⁽²⁾.


Sheikh Muhammad Bin Abdir-Rahman Mu'eenud-Deen Al-Eejy As-Safawy began writing his book "Jami'ut-Tibyaan Fit-Tafseer" in the sacred Rawdhah on the 2nd of Jumadah Al-Akhirah, 904 AH and he accomplished it on the 25th of Ramadhan, 905 AH ⁽³⁾.

Sheikh Abdus-Salaam Bin Muhammad Amin Bin Shamsid-Deen Ad-Daghastany (died 1202AH) also

⁽¹⁾ Mil'ul-'Eebah Bima Jumi'a Bitulil-Ghaibah Fil-Wijhatil-Wajeehah Ilal-Haramain Makkah Wataibah by Abu Abdillah Muhammad Bin Umar Bin Rasheed Al-Fihry, vol5, pp. 21-26.

⁽²⁾ Lisaanul-Meezaan, vol. 5, pp. 373 under the chapter "those called Muhammad".

⁽³⁾ Kashfuzhunoon, vol. 1, pp. 610, Tabaqaatul-Mufasssireen by Adnarawy vol. 1, pp. 373.



concluded his footnotes on Sahih Al-Bukhary in the sacred Rawdhah in the year 1160 AH⁽¹⁾.

One of the pleasantly gracious things the Muslim sultans and governors used to do was that they used to make endowments for reading and learning the Qur'an and Hadith or some other religious books relating to the prophet's attributes and characteristics in the sacred Rawdhah.

Today the area of the sacred Rawdhah has been expanded along with the expansion of the holy prophet's mosque. As a result of the pervading security and luxury the number of visitors and residents in Medinah has become doubled and multiplied, and the sacred Rawdhah becomes crowded with respectable visitors throughout the year. This makes it very difficult to conduct intellectual study circles inside Ar-Rawdhah.

(1) Al-A'laam By Az-Zirakly, vol. 4, pp. 7.





Juristic Legal Rulings Pertaining to the Sacred Rawdhah

The Jurists stated a number of legal rulings and codes of conduct that particularly pertain to the sacred Rawdhah. This is for the fact that Ar-Rawdhah has some peculiarity that distinguishes it from other aspects of the prophet's mosque. The most glaring of these rulings and codes of conduct are:

1. Some Jurists of the Shafi'eyyah school of thought and others stated that it is undesirable for one to retain a special place in the sacred Rawdhah by putting his prayer mat or something like that there while he is yet to come to the place. This is because this kind of practice is a way of forcefully occupying that portion and preventing other Muslims from praying in it ⁽¹⁾.

(1) Majmu' Fataawa by Ibn Taimiyyah, vol. 24, pp. 216, Hashiyatu Qalyuby and Hashiyatu 'Umairah, Tuhfatul-Muhtaaaj, vol. 6, Hashiyatul-Bujairimy, vol. 1.

2. Some Jurists stated that one praying in Ar-Rawdhah should not spit on his left even though no one is on his left side. This is despite the fact that to spit and burry one's sputum on his left is permissible but as a way of revering the direction of the sacred Tomb they have made this impermissible⁽¹⁾.
3. Some Jurists also stated that it is the established legal practice of the prophet for the Imam to place the corpse's head on his right-hand side while offering the funeral prayer anywhere except in the sacred Rawdhah for he should place the corpse's head on his left as a way of showing respect and courtesy to the holy prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him)⁽²⁾.
4. Al-Hafizh As-Subky stated in his book "At-Tabaqaat" that any one that sits inside Ar-Rawdhah and swears that he is inside the Paradise implying what the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) meant by saying that the sacred Rawdhah is part of the Paradise, fulfils his oath⁽³⁾.

(1) Tarhut-Tathreeb vol. 3, pp. 383, Hashiyatu Qalyuby and Hashiyatu 'Umairah vol. 1. This issue cannot be imagined this time around whereby the floor of the sacred Rawdhah is carpeted. It can only be assumed in the previous times when Muslims where praying on sand.

(2) Sharhul-Kharshy, vol. 2, Al-Fawaakihud-Dawaany vol. 2, pp. 684 (Manhul-Jalil Sharhu Mukhtasar Khalil).

(3) Al-Fataawa Al-Fiqhiyyatul-Kubra by As-Subky, vol. 1.

5. A severe warning has been set forth with regards to one that makes a false oath by the sacred Pulpit. On the authority of Jabir Bin Abdillah (may Allah be pleased with him) that Allah's apostle (blessings and peace of Allah be on him) said: "Whoever makes a false oath on my pulpit should seek his seat in the Hellfire". Transmitted by Imam Malik, Ibn Abi Shaibah and Imam Ahmad though this phraseology belongs to Imam Malik ⁽¹⁾.

The phraseology of Ibn Abi Shaibah and Abu Dawud says: "No one makes a false oath on this pulpit of mine even if it was for a green chewing stick but would seek his seat in the Hellfire or has done what obligatorily attracts for him the punishment in the Hellfire" ⁽²⁾.

It is on this basis that the people of Medina do not ask one to take an oath by the sacred Pulpit except for something very valuable. Imam Malik said: Our established practice in Medinah is that one is never asked to take an oath by the sacred Pulpit except for something that is worth one-quarter of a Dinar or more ⁽³⁾.

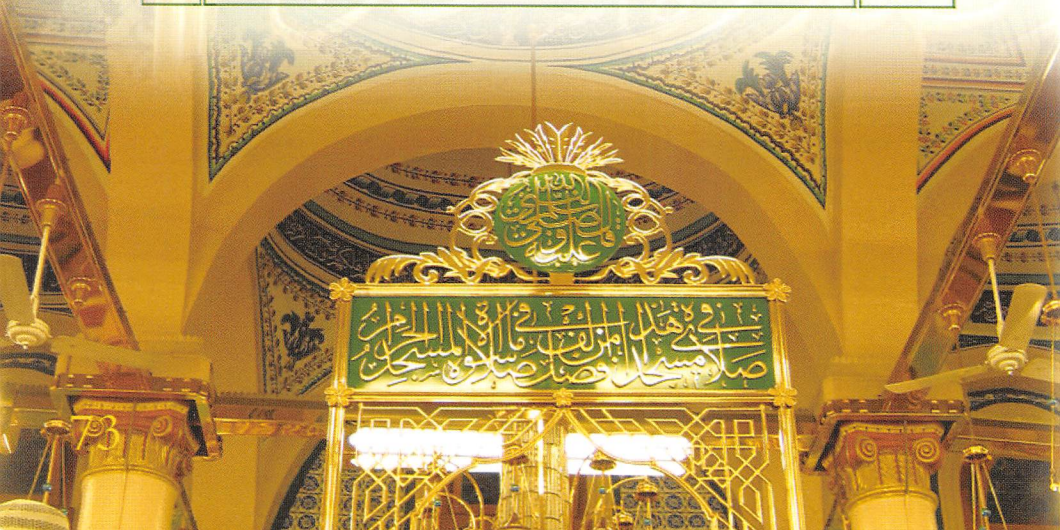
(1) Al-Muwatta', the book of Adjudications. chapter on what came regarding breaking an oath taken by the sacred Pulpit of the prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be on him), pp. 519. Al-Musnad vol. 23. pp. 54. Hadith no. 14706.

(2) Al-Musannaf. vol. 11. pp. 366. Hadith no. 22582.

(3) Al-Mudawwanatul-Kubra. vol. 4. pp. 5.

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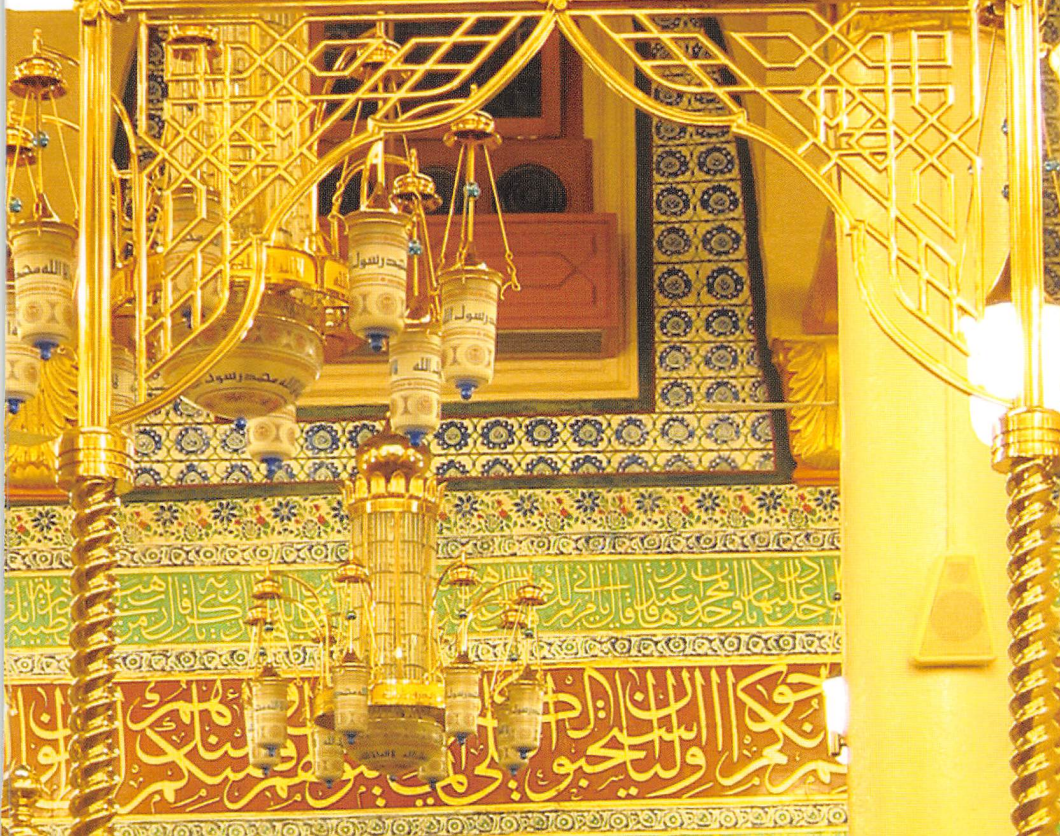
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محمد بن عبد الله
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